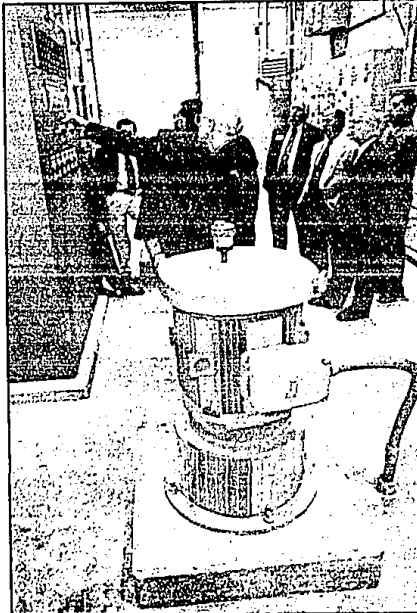




STAFF PHOTO BY BILL HARRIS

Wastewater tour: Farmington Director of Public Works Kevin Gushman (above, left) explains the operation of the rainwater retention facility to dignitaries from Owosso. Philip Heavlin (second from left) is mayor pro-tem, Nelson Gates is the police chief, Gail Wickenhiser is city clerk and Philip Hathaway is director of community development. At right, Owosso officials get a tour of the facility on Nine Mile. They also toured other Farmington facilities such as the downtown library, which caught their eye and prompted discussion about the Owosso library.



Exchanging

Cities of Farmington and Owosso share ideas, ways of operating

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@oe.homecomm.net

Owosso city officials Tuesday were treated to a guided tour of Farmington, and then reciprocated by hosting a Farmington city contingent two days later.

It was all part of the annual "Mayor's Exchange Day." Such visits enable visitors a closer glimpse at what other communities are doing, perhaps with an eye toward incorporating some of those ideas themselves.

Farmington Mayor Bill Hartsock and his counterpart from Owosso, Jack Davis, led the tours for their respective cities.

"It's more than a day off, there's a real purpose to it," said Bill Richards, Farmington's acting city manager. "There's information sharing. We really learn a lot from the other communities when we go there."

And vice versa. Tuesday, for example, Davis and other Owosso representatives toured Farmington's retention basin, the downtown branch of the Farmington Community Library, public safety department, "Kids World" playscape, Civic Theatre and Governor Warner Mansion.

There also was lunch at Marco's Restaurant on Grand River, as usual.

One topic of discussion was the public safety concept, which in Farmington requires the same people to do the jobs of police, fire and medical emergency.

Richards said Owosso officials

do not think such a program would work in their community, because the fire department "has a tradition of providing strong ambulance services." A combined department, therefore, would prove prohibitive from a cost standpoint.

Highlights of the tour of Farmington, judging by the comments from Owosso officials, included the playscape, Civic and recently renovated library's youth library.

About Kids World, built in 1999 at Shiawassee Park, Richards said the visitors thought it was "a very good value for the taxpayers."

Richards estimated that the total amount to build such a facility would be about \$450,000 but only \$75,000 of city money was required; the rest came through via donations of time, money and materials.

The revamped Civic also drew

praise. "In their words, they thought we had a real jewel there," Richards said.

Owosso was selected for the program because it has a population base close to that of Farmington.

"The interesting thing about Mayor's Exchange Day is you see the different ways that people approach similar problems," Richards added.

Residents will be able to turn to other utility firms

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@oe.homecomm.net

Utility options apparently will soon begin opening up for residents of the city of Farmington.

The Farmington City Council recently adopted an electrical and gas supply ordinance and is now considering franchises for three companies. If the council grants those franchises at its Monday, June 19, meeting, they would be permitted to do business within the city.

At the May 15 council meeting, ordinances were introduced to

grant electrical franchises to DTE Energy Marketing, Inc., Engage Energy US, L.P. and Nordic Electric, L.L.C.

The Michigan Public Service Commission, MPSC, recently established a process to be followed by municipalities, to oversee "the competitive supply" of electrical energy for Michigan residents.

"It's all a matter of competition," Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff said earlier this month. "The MPSC thought competition would provide consumers with greater opportuni-

ties, for better pricing."

The franchises would only allow companies to use existing supply lines or systems.

The cost for a company to apply for a franchise is \$3,500.

"Residents will eventually be seeing letters from other electrical suppliers, maybe from outside the state," Lauhoff said, "asking them to do business with them at different rates."

So far, no companies have contacted the city about applying for a franchise to supply gas, Lauhoff said.

Sold out:

East Middle School students

tripped the light fantastic in their new theater

with a recent production of "Annie Jr."

The first two shows were sold out; a third was added and also sold out.



New theater at East Middle School hosts a winning sell out

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@oe.homecomm.net

The advance buzz about the East Middle School production of *Annie Jr.* was splendid. Enough so, in fact, for the originally scheduled two shows to sell out and for a third show to be added.

By the way, the third show also sold out.

Annie Jr., a condensed version

of the ever-popular Broadway musical *Annie*, was the first production performed at East Middle School's new theater arts facility — actually the Farmington district school's cafeteria. Approximately 250 spectators watched all three shows in mid-April, said East teacher Cathy Cordle, director of the theater arts program.

"It's the condensed version of

Annie," Cordle explained. "It's designed for middle school students. ... Songs are adjusted into keys that middle school kids can handle better."

Cordle said 97 students in grades 6-8 participated; 62 for the cast and 35 for the crew. Assisting in the production were teachers Jennifer Franklin (choreographer) and Beth Latrou

Please see ANNIE, A4

CASINO WINDSOR™ GIVES YOU
MORE!



MORE CHANCES TO WIN!

With the U.S. exchange rate \$1^{US} = \$1.45^{CAN}.

More cash means more play time and more chances to win!

MORE ENTERTAINMENT!

Our Showtime™ Lounge brings you the stars you grew up with, up close and personal!

MORE COMFORT & CONVENIENCE!

Our exceptional customer service and location in beautiful downtown Windsor means you'll simply have

a **MORE** enjoyable time.

Is this & **MORE** worth a quick trip across the border?

YOU BET IT IS!

For more information call Casino Marketing at 1-800-991-7777.



Must be 18 years old to enter Casino Windsor.
*Based on the exchange rate at time of printing. Actual exchange rate may vary.